

Court Information Release



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Chief Judge Castillo Joins Chicago Faith Leaders in Conversation about Criminal Justice Reform

Today Chief Judge Rubén Castillo, alongside Chief Judge Timothy Evans of the Circuit Court of Cook County, led a discussion with lawyers, judges, and Chicago faith leaders in a “Conversation About Criminal Justice Reform.”

“What our criminal justice system needs is more love. Through working with participants in our federal Court’s pre-trial and re-entry courts, we know that federal defendants can achieve law-abiding and productive lives when they have steady employment, rehabilitative support for substance abuse addictions, and a nurturing environment, which can be a family, a place of worship, or even the Court itself,” said Chief Judge Castillo.

Judge Castillo urged faith leaders to connect their eligible congregants with the Court’s Second C.H.A.N.C.E. Re-entry Program and SOAR Program. District Judge Sharon Johnson Coleman, who was also part of the conversation, stressed the importance of jury service and highlighted the Court’s efforts to achieve more diverse juries.

The conversation was sponsored by the Chicago Bar Association and was hosted at the New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church on Chicago’s South Side.

The Sentencing Options that Achieve Results (SOAR) Program is an 18-24 months long pre-trial alternative program. SOAR Court defendants receive intensive supervision as they focus on their sobriety, are involved in goal-setting to increase their education levels, seek or maintain constructive employment and maintain a productive lifestyle. Successful completion of the program results in either the imposition of a non-custodial sentence, reduction to a misdemeanor conviction, or possible dismissal of the criminal charges.

The Court’s James B. Moran Second C.H.A.N.C.E. Re-entry Program assists former inmates in reintegrating into the community and living law-abiding lives after they are released from prison. Bi-monthly court sessions address participants’ progress and performance on federal

supervision. Individuals who successfully complete the Second C.H.A.N.C.E. Program are rewarded with a reduction of federal supervision.

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Above: Chief Judge Rubén Castillo

Below: Rev. Elena H. Calloway; Terry M. Murphy, Executive Director of the Chicago Bar Association; Judge Sharon Johnson Coleman, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois





Above: Chief Judge Castillo and Chief Judge Evans

